

\*\*\*\*\*FLIGHT INSTRUCTOR BULLETIN\*\*\*\*\*

**BULLETIN NUMBER 1**

**TASK:** Bird Avoidance

**SUBTASKS:** None

**OBJECTIVE:** To develop awareness and procedures to aid in avoiding a bird strike.

**STANDARDS:** N/A

**CONDITIONS:** N/A

**DESCRIPTION:** 1. **The Facts**

We don't know just how many bird strikes occur each year simply because most pilots don't report the incident unless there's a great deal of damage. But we do know that approximately eight aircraft are lost every year as a result of in-flight collisions with birds, and the number of lives lost in these accidents is staggering.

According to the FAA, if you hit a two-pound seagull while traveling at 120 mph, the force exerted would be equal to 4,800 pounds. If you're flying a jet at 600 mph and hit the same seagull, the force exerted would be 72,000 pounds. Some anti-aircraft rounds exert less force than that.

2. **What can you do?**

The NTSB and the FAA offer several suggestions:

- a. Don't fly beneath a flock of birds. When birds are frightened by an oncoming noise they inevitably tend to dive for the ground.

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- b. Birds normally dive to avoid a collision. If a bird strike appears imminent pitch up in an attempt to fly above the bird.
- c. Turn on your landing light (day or night) when operating in or around an airport known to have a bird hazard. Birds have a better chance of avoiding you than you have of avoiding them, but turn on your lights so they can see you coming!
- d. When flying in areas of bird concentrations, such as along the coast or near lakes, turn on your landing light.
- e. Avoid areas where there could be bird concentrations such as marshlands, land fills, or ponds. If you must fly over such areas, don't fly at low levels.

**NOTE:** Most sections of the county see a great deal of bird activity from August until December, then again from March through May. This is when most bird strike accidents occur, and they almost always occur below 5,000 feet.

Airports are the biggest danger areas, especially airports surrounded by lakes, ponds, and dump areas. Coastal airports are particularly plagued by waterfowl.